Claims

1. A compound which is highly selective for CRFR1 without having any significant cross-reactivity for corticotropin-releasing-factor-receptor-2 (CRFR2) and/or corticotropin-releasing-factor-binding protein (CRFBP), said compound comprising or alternatively consisting of the amino acid sequence Glx^{1} -Gly^{2} -Pro^{3} -Pro^{4} -Xaa^{5} -Ser^{6} -Xaa^{7} -Asp^{8} -Leu^{9} -Xaa^{10} -Leu^{11} -Glu^{12} -Leu^{13} -Leu^{14} -Arg^{15} -Glu^{16} -Val^{17} -Leu^{18} -Glu^{19} -Xaa^{20} -Xaa^{21} -Arg^{22} -Ala^{23} -Xaa^{24} -Gln^{25} -Leu^{26} -Ala^{27} -Gln^{28} -Gln^{29} -Ala^{30} -Ala^{31} -Asn^{32} -Asn^{33} -Arg^{34} -Leu^{35} -Leu^{36} -Leu^{37} -Asp^{38} -Thr^{39} -Ala^{40} (SEQ ID No: 1).

2. The compound of claim 1 wherein:

(a) Xaa^{5} is Ile, Leu or any amino acid residue having similar physicochemical characteristics as Ile; and/or

(b) Xaa^{7} is Ile, Leu or an amino acid residue having similar physicochemical characteristics as Ile; and/or

(c) Xaa^{10} is Ser, Thr or an amino acid residue having similar physicochemical characteristics as Serin; and/or

(d) Xaa^{20} is Met, Norleucine or any amino acid residue having similar physicochemical characteristics as Met; and/or

(e) Xaa^{21} is Glu, Asp or an amino acid residue having similar physicochemical characteristics as Glu; and/or

(f) Xaa^{24} is Glu, Asp or an amino acid residue having similar physicochemical characteristics as Glu.

3. The compound of claim 1 or 2 which is Glx^{1} -Gly^{2} -Pro^{3} -Pro^{4} -Ile^{5} -Ser^{6} -Ile^{7} -Asp^{8} -Leu^{9} -Ser^{10} -Leu^{11} -Glu^{12} -Leu^{13} -Leu^{14} -Arg^{15} -Glu^{16} -Val^{17} -Leu^{18} -Glu^{19} -Met^{20} -Glu^{21} -Arg^{22} -Ala^{23} -Glu^{24} -Gln^{25} -Leu^{26} -Ala^{27} -Gln^{28} -Gln^{29}

-Ala^{30} -Ala^{31} -Asn^{32} -Asn^{33} -Arg^{34} -Leu^{35} -Leu^{36} -Leu^{37} -Asp^{38} -Thr^{39} -Ala^{40} (SEQ ID No: 2).

4. A nucleic acid molecule encoding the compound of any one of claims 1 to 3.

5. A vector comprising the nucleic acid molecule of claim 4.

6. The compound of any one of claims 1 to 3 which is labelled.

7. The compound of any one of claims 1 to 3 which is modified by:
   (a) formation of pharmaceutically acceptable salts;
   (b) formation of pharmaceutically acceptable complexes; and/or
   (c) synthesis of pharmacologically active polymers.

8. A pharmaceutical composition comprising the compound of any one of claims 1, 2, 3, 6 or 7 and/or the nucleic acid of claim 4 and/or the vector of claim 5 and optionally a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier and/or diluent.

9. A diagnostic composition comprising the compound of any one of claims 1, 2, 3, 6 or 7.

10. A kit comprising the compound of any one of claims 1, 2, 3, 6 or 7 and/or the nucleic acid of claim 4 and/or the vector of claim 5 and optionally instructions to use.

11. Use of the compound of any one of claims 1, 2, 3, 6 or 7 and/or the nucleic acid of claim 4 and/or the vector of claim 5 for the preparation of a pharmaceutical composition for the treatment of depression.

12. The use of claim 11, wherein said depression is exogenic (like pharmacogenic), endogenic (like vital), psychogenic, agitated, anaclitic, arteriosclerotic, reactive and/or senile depression.

13. Use of the compound of any one of claims 1, 2, 3, 6 or 7 for the preparation of a diagnostic composition for the determination of pituitary corticotroph responsiveness.

14. The use of claim 13 for differentiating pituitary and ectopic production of ACTH in patients with ACTH-dependent Cushing's syndrome.